

# **THE INTENTIONALITY MODEL OF PRESENTATIONS:**

## **TOWARDS A SPEECH ACT AND GENRE ANALYSIS OF BUSINESS PRESENTATIONS**

**PhD Dissertation Summary  
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## 1 Introduction

The chief aim of the introduction is to establish the research niche by providing evidence for the claim that business presentations are a highly popular genre, but academic research in the field is lagging behind the progress of technology and there is a need for creating a theoretical framework to explain and analyse this globally expanding genre. There has been some research into the field of presentations, particularly focusing on scientific and medical talks (Bullard, 1981; Souillard & Kerr, 1987; Van Naerssen, 1982), as well as some publications on academic and business presentations (McGee, 1999; Rogers, 2000; Rowley-Jolivet, & Carter-Thomas, 2005; Tractinsky & Meyer, 1999); however, these have mostly been short articles and sporadic studies.

Presentations are a relatively new, yet highly popular genre with about 30 million PowerPoint presentations being conducted worldwide on a daily basis in 2001 (Parker, 2001). This popularity is also reflected in the boom of textbooks, manuals and guidance available for speakers wishing to improve their skills. There are continuously new books on the use of PowerPoint (Lowe, 2003; Oulton, 2005; Heathcote, 2001; Wempen, 2004), guides for presentation skills trainers (Bienvenu, 2000) and managers (Rotondo & Rotondo, 2002; Zelazny 2006; Hager & Scheiber, 1997; Peoples, 1992), public speakers (Lamerton, 2001) and students of business and ESP (McCarthy & Hatcher, 2002; Reinhart, 2002; Williams, 2008; Comfort, 1995; Powell, 1996). Such textbooks are abundant, but there is a lack of systematic and comprehensive academic research. This is visible both in the incomplete referencing in the textbooks and in the difficulties involved in collecting research articles. Research is being conducted in the field, but most of the studies have been small-scale ones focusing only on a particular aspect of presentations.

There is also a discrepancy in the definition of the term presentation. Various definitions are provided by several authors, but the concept remains largely elusive. Often definitions, such as the one provided by J. Rotondo and M. Rotondo (2002), are too wide. Other authors like McCarthy and Hatcher (2002) are not sufficiently concrete and simply provide a list of situations in which presentations may occur. Probably one of the clearest definitions is that of Ellis and Johnson (1994) who describe “a pre-planned, prepared and structured talk” (p. 222) which may inform or persuade. Yet, even this seems to be too general and can easily encompass academic and scientific presentations, as well as political speeches and business talks. In view of Yates and Orlikowski’s (2007)

description of how PowerPoint printouts and electronic files are used, it is clear that new forms of presentations are emerging. All these factors point to the need to define the genre of business presentations and provide theoretical foundations for distinguishing business presentations from other types of communication.

## 2 Aims and Rationale

This research is of an exploratory nature, aiming to uncover and depict the previously relatively uncharted terrain of the genre of business presentations. The main task is to identify and portray the characteristic features of this type of discourse, to see what distinguishes business presentations from other types of presentations and also place the genre within the wider perspective of communication and social interaction. In order to do this, it will be necessary to have a multidisciplinary approach drawing on the fields of discourse and genre analysis, pragmatics, sociolinguistics language skills teaching, pedagogy and stylistics. The overall approach of the Ph.D. research is exploratory (Creswell, 2003), inductive (Maykut & Morehouse, 1994) and heuristic (Selinger & Shohamy, 1989). This means that it does not attempt to either substantiate or refute a particular hypothesis. It endeavours, instead, to define and describe the genre of business presentations.

This study has three basic aims:

- 1) **THEORETICAL:** to create a theoretical model that is capable of explaining, describing and analysing business presentations;
- 2) **EMPIRICAL:** to apply the theoretical model as an analytical instrument in empirical research on a corpus of business presentations in order to justify the validity and reliability of the model and describe the genre of business presentations in terms of the context, the communicative purpose, the participants, the choices of content structure and the communicative strategies employed by the speaker;
- 3) **PEDAGOGICAL:** to provide theoretical and empirical research foundations for instruction and training in this particular branch of ESP.

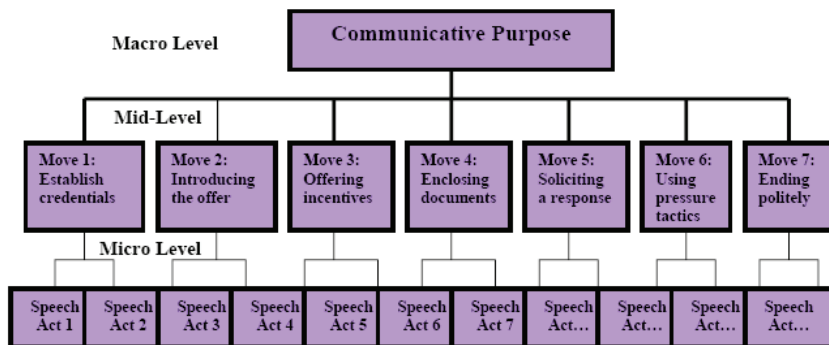
### 3 The Intentionality Model

#### 3.1 Basic Premises

In order to address the first research aim of constructing a theoretical framework for defining and analysing business presentations, various theories of communication are used as the basic building blocks to put together an overall comprehensive system. This system or theoretical framework for analysing business presentations is called the Intentionality Model. It has **three basic premises** and its starting point is the notion of intentionality as a general, umbrella term. **The first basic premise is the very simple and obvious principle that most human activities, including communicative events, are purposeful.** Whether consciously or instinctively, all the parties engaged in communication have some sort of aim, a reason to talk or write and an expectation of an outcome or result. Communication cannot simply happen of its own accord. It must be instigated by the participants who intend (to echo Austin, 1962) to do something with their words.

**The second premise is that there are levels of intentionality evident in each communicative event, which constitute a hierarchy of intentionality.** This hierarchy is comprised of various levels of intentions. At the top of the hierarchy is the most general and largest unit, which is the communicative purpose of the exchange. This provides the basis for a top-down genre analysis of presentations. At the bottom of the hierarchy there are the most specific and minimal units of intentionality, which are speech acts. In between these two boundary levels, there can be many others, depending on the length and complexity of the exchange. These mid-level intentions, ranking between the general communicative purpose and the smallest units, are described as genre moves by Swales (1990) and Bhatia (1993). They are a level lower than the communicative purpose, but still larger units than the minimal units of intentionality, i.e. speech acts.

Speech acts or illocutions are the smallest exponents of intentionality, thereby constituting the lowest and most specific level of analysis. This will provide bottom-up analysis in empirical studies. **The third basic premise of the model is that the smallest units of intentionality, the speech acts, can be grouped into four categories according to the language functions they perform.** This grouping results in a new taxonomy of speech acts based on the more general language functions or purposes that the illocutions fulfil. Figure 1 is a graphic representation of the hierarchy of intentionality.



*Figure 1. Hierarchy of intentionality.*

### 3.2 Top-down Analysis – Genre Analysis

The previously described levels of intentionality result in two levels and types of analysis used in the model: first, **macro level genre analysis**, a **top-down** view of the context of the presentation and an analysis of the mid-level genre moves; and second, **micro level speech act analysis**, a **bottom-up** examination of the pragmatic content of the presentation.

The top-down approach analyses the genre of presentations and its contextual aspects. These include the central notion of communicative purpose (investigated through methods set forth by Swales (1990), Bhatia (1993) and Askehave (1999)) as well as the discourse community, the roles and the relationship of the participants (which are explained with the help of Hymes' (1972a, 1972b) work on the ethnography of communication and communicative competence).

The mid-level intentionality units are also included in the top-down approach. In the case of business presentations these coincide with Bhatia's (1993) seven moves of promotional genres: 1) Establishing credentials; 2) Introducing the offer; 3) Offering incentives; 4) Enclosing documents; 5) Soliciting a response; 6) Using pressure tactics; 7) Ending politely.

### 3.3 Bottom-up Analysis – Speech Act Analysis

Though speech acts have been studied extensively for almost half a century now, there is still a considerable amount of vagueness and ambiguity associated with the term. No clear definition of the length of the speech act has been provided, nor what is usually contained in a single speech act. Hence, one of the central focuses of the theoretical part of the

research is to define the boundaries of a single speech act. According to Searle (1969) “speech acts are the basic or **minimal units of linguistic communication**” (p. 16). Therefore, for the purposes of this study, what is needed is the smallest unit in the hierarchy of intentionality, which is a **simple sentence or proposition** or any element that can be substituted by a proposition (for example: “First, ...” = “This is the first point of my presentation, ...”). Its boundaries are usually signalled by a short pause in the presentation. Complex sentences need to be broken down into simple ones in the analysis. The choice of a simple proposition as the basis for setting the boundaries of speech acts is also supported by Searle’s (1965) propositional content conditions and propositional content rule.

Apart from defining the unit of a speech act, the model also provides for a new taxonomy of speech acts. The best known speech act taxonomies are those of Austin (1962) and Searle (1975). Neither of these taxonomies is deemed to be appropriate for the model as the criteria for categorisation cannot yield groups of speech acts that would be possible to bring in line with the hierarchy of intentionality. What is needed is a system of classification whose criterion would be linked to the notion of intentionality. This is why language functions were considered to be a particularly convenient foundation for the new taxonomy. A systematic review of various language function classifications is put forward by Halliday, (Halliday & Hasan, 1989) and includes the frameworks of Malinowski, Bühler, Britton and Morris.

For the new taxonomy, all the frameworks were fused to end up with three main categories: organisational, informative and interpersonal acts. The interpersonal acts are further subdivided into territorial and cooperative based on Brown and Levinson’s (1978) positive and negative face wants and Widdowson’s (1983) Territorial and Cooperative Imperatives. This ultimately resulted in a system of four categories of speech acts: organisational, informative, territorial and cooperative.

The definitions of the categories are as follows:

**a) ORGANISATIONAL** – These are technical devices that **help organise the discourse**. They signal the order of and the link between various parts of the presentation. Typically, they include ordinals and logical linkers and are most often found at the beginning and end of a point, as well as in the introduction and conclusion of the presentations. The level of such overt signalling varies across cultures, but within the business community, and in particular regarding presentation genres, it is considered to increase the clarity of the organisation of ideas and indicates a well



prepared and logically structured presentation. Therefore, due to the exceptional nature of the genre, these strategies gain particular importance.

b) **INFORMATIVE** – These acts **provide information in a neutral manner**, without any additional function or personal engagement. Their primary focus is on factual content. Characteristic examples include lists of facts and statistics, narrating the history of something, as well as descriptions and explanations.

c) **TERRITORIAL** – These are interpersonal strategies used to **protect the territory of the individuals and maintain their independence**. Territorial acts distance the discourse participants by focusing on the negative face wants of the speaker, namely, “the desire to be unimpeded in one’s actions” (Brown & Levinson, 1978, p. 13). From an anthropological point of view, these acts are used to express the speaker’s claim to individual territories and personal preserves as well as asserting the rights to non-distraction and freedom. This category is named after Widdowson’s (1983) Territorial Imperative, and examples usually include threats, criticisms and warnings, as well as evasive, aggressive and offensive tactics. Territorial speech acts are not usually frequent in business presentations unless the power relations of the participants and the circumstances of the occasion warrant resorting to these strategies. However, some territorial acts may be used very skilfully by expert presenters in the sixth move of promotional genres, where pressure tactics are employed.

d) **COOPERATIVE** – These are the opposite of the territorial category and are interpersonal strategies used to **bridge the gap between the speaker and the audience**, focusing on same group membership and solidarity. This category is named after Widdowson’s (1983) Cooperative Imperative. Typical examples include compliments, offers, suggestions, jokes (but not at the expense of the audience), techniques for engaging the audience and creating rapport, real or rhetorical questions, thanking, agreeing and expressions of support and understanding. Positive face (Brown & Levinson, 1978) politeness strategies also belong to this category. A high frequency of cooperative speech acts throughout the speech contributes to an atmosphere of friendly collaboration, and they are characteristic of promotional talks, where it is in the speaker’s interest to win the audience’s approval, as well as of internal corporate motivational presentations.

### 3.4 Describing the Intentionality Model

Figure 2 shows the graphic representation of the framework, namely, the Intentionality Model of business presentations as communicative events. As can be seen, the **set of communicative purposes** that business presentations as genres share is to benefit commercially, either directly or indirectly, from the presentation. This refers to the class of communicative events that comprises the general notion of business presentation, which incorporates several subgenres like sales presentations, team briefings, presentations on tenders, forecasts, market research results and so on. Each of these types of presentations is characterised by a particular type of **setting**, with time, place and occasion, and **participants**, presenter and audience, whose community membership, social distance and power status will determine their mutual relationship. The setting, the participant roles, the **topic** and the communicative purpose constitute the rationale for the presentation and provide a contextual framework of constraints. The communicative purpose is the central element of the genre and can be explicit, indicated openly by the presenter, or implicit, deduced from the content and context of the talk. A single presentation may also have several purposes, which should be taken into serious consideration in the final description of the genre.

The realisation of the communicative event brings about a particular **exemplar** of the genre in question. It has a particular structure, style and content which can be analysed from a linguistic and semantic point of view. However, the model concentrates on the content from a pragmatic point of view: it analyses the speech acts of the presentation. These can be organisational (supporting and signalling the structure), informative (conveying information in a relatively neutral manner), territorial (protecting the individual's freedom of action) and cooperative (seeking approval and building group cohesion).

The whole of the speech event may be considered to constitute a **macro speech act** (van Dijk, 1977a, 1977b) which in turn contains sequences of **mid-level moves** and **micro speech acts**. Viewing the presentation from the perspective of a macro speech act allows for establishing a relationship between the **communicative purpose** (i.e., the **macro illocution**) and the **speech acts** in the content (i.e., the **micro illocutions**) in order to assess to what degree and by what method the global intention is reflected in the content of the presentation.

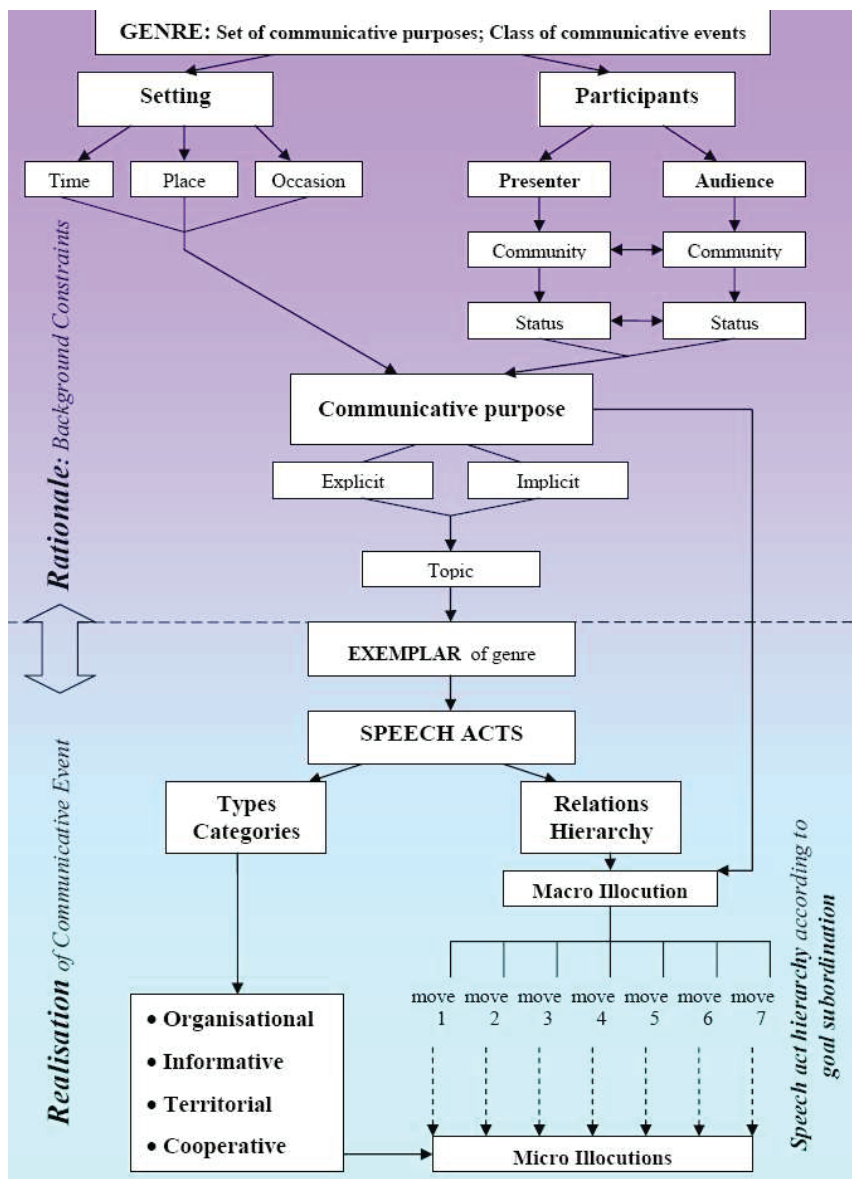


Figure 2. The Intentionality Model of business presentations.

## **4 Method**

### **4.1 Research Instrument**

The Intentionality Model can easily be operationalised into an analytical system, called a speech Event Analysis, which is the empirical side of the coin of the theoretical framework. It is a composite of three different levels of analysis: macro level analysis of the communicative purpose, the participants and the topic of the event; mid-level analysis of the moves of promotional genres; and micro level analysis of the pragmatic content of the presentation using the speech act taxonomy. A sample Event Analysis can be seen in Figure 3. The template contains coding slots for each of the elements of the model: setting (time, place and occasion), participants (community membership, status, relationship), communicative purpose (explicit or implicit), genre moves and speech act frequencies (organisational, informative, territorial or cooperative). In addition, the analysis contains the grades of two co-assessors who awarded points ranging from 0 to 5 (5 being the best) for several linguistic and pragmatic criteria and a percentage mark (80% usually being the highest) for the overall presentation. The marking criteria include: structure, rapport (contact with audience and appropriacy of content to the situation), handling questions, use of language and use of techniques (rhetorical devices for presentations, predominantly cooperative speech acts).

The completed Event Analyses can then be used to compare performances of expert and student presenters, higher versus lower rated speakers or even follow the progress and development of a particular speaker by collecting Event Analyses at the different stages of his/her development. Any notes that the researcher made during the coding of unusual patterns of speech acts can then be used to illustrate the findings and support the overall Event Analysis.

The current inter-rater reliability of this system is 98% for the division of the speech act units and 80% for categorising the speech acts into the four groups of the speech act taxonomy.

# **EVENT ANALYSIS OF PRESENTATION: R. B. (IBS, DECEMBER 2004, +)**

**I. Genre (presentation type):** sales presentation

**II. Setting:**      **Time:** afternoon  
                          **Place:** friend's home  
                          **Occasion:** home product demo (presentation); semi-formal gathering

**III. Participants:**

	<b>Presenter</b>	<b>Relationship</b>	<b>Audience</b>
<b>Community</b>	Tupperware Distributor	Different community	Potential clients
<b>Status</b>	Distributor Middle	Formal, but friendly	Potential clients High

**IV. Communicative purpose:**

<b>Explicit aim(s):</b>	Not stated
<b>Implicit aim(s):</b>	Primary: sell products. Secondary: enlarge network by befriending audience members and signing up new distributors; setting an example to new distributors.

**V. Topic:** Tupperware history, introducing 3 new products, sampling and tasting.

**VI. Moves:**

<b>Credentials</b>	<b>Offer</b>	<b>Incentives</b>	<b>Enclosing</b>	<b>Response</b>	<b>Pressure</b>	<b>Ending</b>
Past company successes	Three cooking products	Easy, fast cooking	Samples	Buy now	Exclusivity	Contact info and tasting

**VII. Speech acts:**

<b>O</b>	<b>I</b>	<b>T</b>	<b>C</b>	<b>Total</b>	<b>Time</b>
23	29	0	26	78	9min

**VIII. Grades:**

<b>Structure</b>	<b>Rapport</b>	<b>Questions</b>	<b>Language</b>	<b>Techniques</b>	<b>Overall</b>
5	5	4	5	5	78%
5	5	4	4	5	78%

*Figure 3. Sample Event Analysis.*

## **4.2 Research Questions**

The empirical study was conducted from the autumn of 2003 to the summer of 2008. During the course of these five years, all three of the research aims were tackled at various phases and in different ways. The design of the Intentionality Model addressed the first aim of the study, the theoretical facet. The other two aims, the empirical and the pedagogical are covered by a series of six studies, each dealing with a specific research question. The research questions include the following:

- 1. How are Question and Answer (Q&A) sessions handled by student presenters?**
- 2. How do the contextual and pragmatic features of students' presentations change during the course of instruction?**
- 3. What are the personality traits of a higher-rated student presenter?**
- 4. What are the contextual and pragmatic features of higher and lower graded student presentations?**
- 5. What characterises Presentation Skills instruction materials and courses? This research question includes two more specific sub-questions: a) What are the features of expert presentations incorporated in instruction materials? b) What are the attributes of a Presentation Skills course in a BA business programme?**
- 6. What are the characteristics of an expert business presenter?**

Each question is the focus of a separate smaller-scale study and all of these studies fit into a larger research project. Most of the six empirical studies have a dual purpose: first, to answer one of the research questions listed above; second, to assist the development of the theoretical framework, the Intentionality Model.

## **5 Summary of Results**

What follows is shot overview of the main results and findings of the dissertation grouped according to the three research aims: theoretical, empirical and pedagogical.

## 5.1 Theoretical

In terms of the theoretical aim, the study has developed the so-called Intentionality Model of business presentations, which is based on three premises. Stemming from the second premise the framework has two approaches, a top-down, genre and a bottom-up speech act analysis. The top-down, genre analysis provided a definition of business presentations:

A business presentation is an **EXTENDED TALK** given **FORMALLY**, most often by an **INDIVIDUAL** before a group of people who constitute an **AUDIENCE**, with the **AIM OF ACHIEVING A COMMERCIAL ADVANTAGE** (e.g. sell products or services, inform about corporate changes or performance, raise company or brand awareness, etc.).

This definition is built up along the lines of Swales' (1990) definition of genre:

A genre comprises a class of **COMMUNICATIVE EVENTS**, the members of which share some set of **COMMUNICATIVE PURPOSES**. These purposes are recognised by expert members of the parent **DISCOURSE COMMUNITY**, and thereby constitute the rationale of the genre. The rationale shapes the schematic structure of the discourse and influences and constrains choice of content and **STYLE**.” (p 58.)

The highlighted elements of both definitions correspond directly to each other: **extended talk = communicative event; formally = style; individual / audience = discourse community; aim of achieving a commercial advantage = communicative purpose**.

The Intentionality Model described in Section 3 and illustrated in Figure 2 forms the rest of the theoretical outcome of the research. The framework serves a dual purpose: it provides the basis for defining the genre and setting up a theory, while at the same time it is easily converted into an analytical system for empirical research. When used for the latter purpose, the transcription of a presentation is coded along all the categories mentioned (setting, participants, communicative purpose, speech act count) to provide a detailed analysis of the presentation, called an Event Analysis.

## 5.2 Empirical

The research project contains six empirical studies each addressing one of the research questions. Most of the empirical studies had a dual purpose: to test the development of the analytical instrument at a particular stage of developing the model and to answer one of the research questions listed above. In terms of the dual purposes, the studies not only contributed effectively to the construction of the Intentionality Model, but also yielded useful results in addressing the research questions.

The results of the two case studies, the expert (research question 6) and the student presenter (research question 3), indicate that personality does not need to represent an obstacle to anyone becoming a successful presenter. What matters is careful preparation. In the case of the student presenter this process entailed choosing a familiar topic, detailed structuring of the talk, writing it out and practicing it aloud. The expert presenter, on the other hand, in his preparation process focused more on researching the background of the audience, thinking of ways to build relationships with them, drawing a mind map of the talk and ensuring control of the setting by running through a check-list of factors. The professional presenter did not write out or practice his talks, in order to ensure that they were “live”, but all his talks were carefully deliberated and prepared. The most important aspect of the professional presenters’ talks is that he consciously tries to avoid discussing business directly, and instead focuses on gaining the audience’s trust and appreciation which he later uses as a foundation for building a sound business relationship with them. So the communicative purpose of his talks shifts from social with new audiences to more commercial with familiar audiences.

The comparison of higher and lower graded presentations (research question 4) showed that there is a somewhat greater consistency in the match between the communicative purpose and the content of the talk in the case of the higher graded presentations. The contextualisation of these talks is much clearer, more detailed and appropriate for business situations, while the lower graded presentations had poorly fulfilled or undefined commercial communicative purposes. The conclusion is that more successful talks are those that are considered to have pragmatic content which is more appropriate to the specific context of the presentation.

The longitudinal study (research question 2) revealed that the students’ ability to structure the talk improves noticeably and significantly with instruction, but that the changes in the use of speech acts and communicative strategies are harder to identify. There is a noted decrease



of territorial acts with time, and the language used to accomplish the other types of acts does reflect elements taught in class, but in general, the students' pragmatic competence lagged behind their organisational skills. This pragmatic competence needs to be developed and reinforced through greater exposure to authentic business presentations, which is also confirmed by the case study of the successful student presenter, who modelled her talks on real presentations she had attended.

Similar findings pertaining to the difference in the structure and the pragmatic abilities of the studies were reached in the study on the question and answer session (research question 1). Students' welcoming techniques were stilted, and they had difficulty in avoiding the use of direct negatives, thereby sounding defensive. Few of the students checked whether they had understood the question properly, which resulted in the audience members being forced to clarify their questions after receiving an unsatisfactory answer. Students also found layered questions difficult to deal with as these types of strategies were not included in instruction, and there is also some indication from the study that student could benefit from being taught to pay more attention to the funnelling and contextualisation that usually precedes a question.

### **5.3 Pedagogical**

There are also numerous implications in relation to the third, pedagogical, aim of the study. The fact that personality is not a significant determinant of a successful presenter is encouraging for teachers and trainers as well as students and trainees. It means that with the right kind of training, anyone can become a successful speaker. The expert presenter said that personality is irrelevant to the talk, whereas the effective student resorted to careful preparation to overcome her shy, quiet demeanour. This brings hope to the instruction process.

The analysis of expert presentations included in instruction materials (research question 5) indicated that presentations included in integrated approaches, like business case studies, have a greater level of contextualisation than specialised Presentation Skills textbooks. So, the former can be more useful for students with less experience and understanding of the whole business process, whereas the latter can be more appropriate for in-service training of practicing presenters. Another pedagogical implication of the study is that many of the books and materials take on a product-oriented approach to instruction, teaching about the elements of a presentation like structure, body language and visual aids.

However, a more process oriented approach could be more beneficial for students in pointing out to them the steps that precede the actual talk. These include researching the type of audience and their background, the aim of the talk, the presenter's goals and the relationship with the audiences, careful selection and organisation of data of the talk to match the requirements of the other researched factors and finally control of the presentation setting and environment. The last finding of this study related to the level of authenticity of the presentations included in teaching materials. Since most of these example presentations are based on authentic presentations, but acted out because of copyright and privacy reasons, it is very useful for students to get adequate exposure to live presentations as well. This could be accomplished through attending real talks with the instructor or streaming presentations from the Internet.

As a result of these and other findings of the study, the Presentation Skills course, was updated to include overt teaching of the definition of business presentations and the context of these communicative events at the beginning of the module. The course now also makes extensive use of the camera to record student presentations, watch them together in class and obtain self-evaluation and student and teacher feedback. The emphasis of the course is on the process of preparation and greater contextualisation.

The longitudinal study brought to the surface the debate concerning the explicit teaching of pragmatic skills. It seems that for students it is easier to learn to structure the talk than to master the ability of applying the appropriate communicative strategies. Aspects of appropriateness are not only harder to learn, but are also less straightforward to teach. Perhaps this can explain the preference of most textbooks to focus on the product elements of structure and performance aspects like voice control, body language and visual aids. Pragmatic competence, on the other hand, required for the appropriate use of the genre takes longer to acquire and is harder to teach explicitly. It is here that the Intentionality Model can make a contribution to the teaching of presentation skills. It can provide a framework for students to use in selecting the most appropriate ways to achieve their communicative purpose with a specific audience. With greater exposure to authentic presentations and focus on the process of researching the background of the audience and the roles and relationship of the participants, with time students can acquire the necessary pragmatic competence to make appropriacy judgements.

## 6 Implications

There are two types of potential benefits of this research: the practical application of the results and the taxonomy and a wider contribution to several fields of applied linguistics. The practical advantages of the research in terms of teaching are easily identifiable, since one of the aims of the research is to enrich Presentation Skills courses. The extensive research into student presentations will have direct classroom implications, from supplementing the course with materials resulting from the study, to redesigning the syllabus according to the findings. It will help to assess how appropriate the teaching materials are and how closely they resemble the reality of business presentations. By looking at high and low graded presentations, it will also become possible not only to teach students how to present, but also how to do so successfully and with the desired effect.

Apart from pre-service classroom teaching, the research will also be useful for in-service company training and consulting. The findings of the empirical research could be used to design special courses to fit the specific needs of a company, but the analytical instrument might prove even more valuable for individual training. An adaptation of the coding system, which is simplified for pedagogical reasons, can be employed to carry out a detailed analysis of presentations made by an individual to build a presenter profile and provide the individual with advice, based on the analysis, to improve the presentation's effectiveness and gear it towards fulfilling specific aims.

There are also possible wider contributions, most notably to the fields of ESP and discourse analysis. In terms of ESP, it will not only enrich the Presentation Skills course, but might have the potential to play a role in other Business English courses by looking at the business world as a discourse community. The likely contributions to the fields of discourse and genre analysis do not stem only from the results of the data-based research, but also from the design of the theoretical framework. A similar approach can be used to describe other genres, starting with a bottom-up micro analysis using the speech act taxonomy, followed by a genre analysis according to the various components and participants of the event, and finishing with a macro Event Analysis. In fact, the system developed here could be used as a sort of blueprint for mapping out the characteristics of many forms of discourse which have not been described previously. Finally, the research can also perhaps make contributions to the fields of pragmatics, in terms of matching the micro and macro illocutions of a

speech event, and sociolinguistics, by looking at the role of presentations or talks with suspended turn-taking in terms of wider social interaction.

## **7 Limitations**

All the empirical studies of this dissertation have the same limitation: their findings are limited to the data they cover and cannot therefore be generalised. The 16 expert presentations analysed come from recordings that accompany only three textbooks. They were selected based on the relevance to the other studies in the overall research, so perhaps the results of presentations in other teaching materials would be different. The 37 student presentations all come from the same cohort of students at a college in Budapest, who all participated in the same Presentation Skills course. Such a controlled and limited environment of course means that the findings might not necessarily be generalisable to other settings. Due to limited access and the labour-intensive nature of the analytical process, a wider selection of data was deemed impractical for this study.

However, the analytical instrument used in the studies resulting from the theoretical model of intentionality has proved to be robust enough to be applied in other studies. The results it yields are exceptionally useful, despite the fact that they might apply only to that particular set of data. As it is grounded in theory, even the findings of the studies of this research, though not generalisable, provide a trustworthy and dependable depiction of this limited data. The Intentionality Model and the resulting analytical system can be applied not only to other business presentations to widen the scope of the research and attempt to corroborate the findings, but with minor adjustments they may also be used to analyse and define other oral genres such as political speeches, academic talks or medical and technical presentations.

Finally, the development of the theoretical framework which constitutes the basis of the Intentionality Model, has potential implications for the fields of pragmatics, philosophy of language and genre analysis. The notion of the intentionality hierarchy, bringing together in a coherent system the ideas of communicative purpose, genre moves and speech acts, can be used in relation to all communicative events. The new speech taxonomy with its four clear categories based on language functions also directly stems from the notion of intentionality, which is the driving force behind all communication.

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**List of Publications and Presentations**  
**Related to the PhD Topic**

- Sazdovska, J. (2008, November). *Designing and Applying a Speech Act and Genre Model for Analysing Business Presentations*. Presentation at the New Concepts and Approaches in English and American Studies PhD Conference, Budapest.
- Sazdovska, J. (2008, April). *Business Presentations: Needs, Skills and Teachability*. Presentation at the NYESZE Conference, Budapest.
- Sazdovska, J. (2007, October). *Curriculum Changes of a Business English Course and Some of Its ESP Components*. Presentation at IATEFL Hungary's 17<sup>th</sup> International Conference, Budapest.
- Sazdovska, J. (2007). Three Phase Analysis of Student Business Presentations. *Working Papers in Language Pedagogy, 1*. Budapest: Eötvös Loránd University.
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